THE INDEPENDENT REFLECTOR.

NUMBER XLV.

Thursday, October 4, 1753.

A Catalogue of ſundry Grievances, which require immediate Redreſs.

----------*Ab ovo*
Uſque ad Mala. HOR.

I SHALL, in my preſent Speculation, beg Leave a little to deviate from my uſual Method of treating my Subject, and inſtead of alloting a whole *Reflector*, to one Inconvenience, throw ſeveral Grievances into a ſingle Paper. Indeed, the Miſchiefs I ſhall offer to the public Conſideration, are ſo evident, that they could not, ſeparately conſidered, compoſe ſo many diſtinct Papers. They are glaring and conſpicuous, and want nothing more to excite Compaſſion, and engage the Friends of Liberty in their Redreſs, than a plain and unimbelliſhed Enumeration. Arguments, in ſupport of ſelf-evident Truths, are idle and impertinent. I ſhall, therefore, without farther Proem or Preface, proceed to a Detail of the Grievances, under which ſeveral of the good People of this Province have long laboured, and that without any Attempt for their Removal.

THE firſt I ſhall mention, is, that which ſeveral honeſt Gentlemen have ſuffered on Account of *Rotten Row*: For it is to be remembered, that not long ſince, many of the worſhipful Members of the Corporation, out of the Exuberance of their Liberality, were diſpoſed to make a Preſent of it to the People, who had Lots bordering upon it. So generous an Intention one would have thought, ought not to have met with any Oppoſition: and yet we all know what a Clamour was raiſed about it. They were even reproached with a Deſign of ſquandering the publick Money, and their diſintereſted Munificence, was repreſented in an odious Light, tho' the very Objection urged againſt their diſpoſing of it *Gratis*, was a cogent Argument in their Favour. For if they were offered five thouſand Pounds by a Gentleman (who by the bye could have no Right to it, becauſe he lived remote from it) the greater was their intended Charity in granting it, thro' *ſpecial Grace* and *meer Motion*. Now, as Generoſity is one of the nobleſt, and moſt diſintereſted Virtues, there cannot be a greater Grievance than to be obſtructed in its Exerciſe; for which Reaſon, I hope, that whenever they renew their generous Offer, it will not meet with ſo abſurd an Oppoſition.

THE Cuſtom-Houſe is evidently aggrieved by the want of a Law to eſtabliſh and enforce its ſupernumerary Perquiſites. We all know, that there is at Preſent no Proviſion for *extraordinary Diſpatch*, for which it is nevertheleſs equitably entitled to an extraordinary Gratuity. But ſuch Gratuities not being enforced by Law, are liable to be daily controverted, and are ſometimes, by ſordid and avaricious Spirits, abſolutely refuſed. Nor is this all. By the pious Genius of the *Britiſh* Conſtitution, a conſiderable Portion of the Year, is ſet a Part and dedicated to the Contemplation of the Lives and Actions of illuſtrious Saints and Martyrs, which has a happy Tendency to inſpire us with an Emulation of their Virtues, and enliven the lamentable Decay and Languor of Religion. In ſuch conſecrated Seaſons it is evident, that no Man of real Piety can conſent

conſent to relinquiſh his devout Meditations for ſecular Employments, without a ſuitable Recompence. And yet, for Services done even on thoſe Days, the Officer muſt entirely depend on the Generoſity of his Employer, without any Certainty of an adequate Reward, to compenſate the Loſs of thoſe holy Exerciſes. I had like to have forgot the Neceſſity for adding a Clauſe to the Act propoſed, prohibiting the Comptroller of the Cuſtoms, for the Time being, from giving any Change for Money to be hereafter received for Services done and performed in the ſaid Cuſtom-Houſe; or at leaſt that it ſhall and may be lawful, to and for the ſaid Comptroller, to retain and keep in his Hands, any Sum of Money not exceeding Eight Shillings, for any Debt accruing as aforeſaid, of Nine Pence, or under, without being accountable for the Surplus to any Perſon or Perſons whatſoever.

A CERTAIN Civil-Law Court in this Province, has long laboured under prodigious Difficulties, and is ſtill as remote from Redreſs as ever. It has been moſt unjuſtly traduc'd, and its Impartiality called in Queſtion, without Heſitation or Reſerve. Now, as Truth and Righteouſneſs always appear in brighter Colours after an impartial Scrutiny, it is to be wiſhed, its moſt inveterate Adverſaries would vouchſafe it an Opportunity of vindicating its immaculate Probity, and wiping off the malevolent Calumnies that have been thrown upon it. A public Acquittal would be a public Confutation of its Enemies, and remain on Record to the Confuſion of the Slanderer, and its own immortal Honour.

SOME of our thrifty Bakers, who have deſerved well of their Country, by endeavouring to introduce brown Bread, which is much cheaper, as well as more wholſome, than white, cannot proſecute their laudable Scheme, without great Jealouſy and Clamour. This I take to be the greater Grievance, as the Flour which they bake into ſuch Bread, cannot by the Act, be exported for fine Flour, and conſequently would be ſo much clear Gain to the City, could they once perſuade their Cuſtomers to the commendable Frugality of a home Conſumption.

AMIDST my Enumeration of public Evils, the tardy Progreſs of our College, occaſioned by the Scrupuloſity of irreſolute Men, is not to be paſſed over in Silence. It's Management has been preſumptuouſly repreſented, as equally appertaining to all the various Denominations of Chriſtians in the Province; and as tho' the Authors and Abettors of ſuch deteſtable Hereſies, were bent on the utter Extirpation of Religion, they have, with unexampled Temerity, rejected the Introduction of ſpiritual Rulers, as baneful to the Growth and Propagation of true Science. Nay, they have not even had the Breeding, humbly to offer our eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment the Preference; when no impartial Thinker, can either doubt the Reality of ſuch an Eſtabliſhment among us, or the Equity of the Claim conſequent thereupon, in as much as both the one and the other, have been publicly aſſerted in a weekly News Paper that was never yet detected of Forgeries. The Perplexity about the Conſtitution of the College, purpoſely created by theſe reſtleſs Spirits, did lately, in the Opinion of many, prevent its final Settlement, at a Time when it was conceived to be juſt on the Criſis of being delivered up, to thoſe who alone have hitherto produced a rational Claim for it. The poſtponing, therefore, the ſaid Claim to be canvaſſed and miſrepreſented by Fanatics and Infidels, may be attended with inſuperable Obſtructions to the laudable Deſign of fixing it on a pure and orthodox Bottom. Had the Aſſembly, on the contrary, ran Headlong into the public-ſpirited Propoſal of excluding Preſbyterians, Diſſenters, Enthuſiaſts, and Deiſts, from any Share in the Adminiſtration of the Academy, as they were publicly adviſed to do, we had already beheld the Dawnings of Literature, and ſhould ſoon have been ſenſible, that none but the Epiſcopalians, from their never-failing Lenity and Indulgence, were deſerving of ſo grand and important a Truſt.

MANY of our young Gentlemen alſo labour under no ſmall Difficulty, in that they cannot, as the Law now ſtands, profane the Name of God without either incurring a Fine, or a very ungenteel Puniſhment. This I take to be the greater Hardſhip, as the prohibiting them from taking the Name of GOD in vain, puts it out of their Power to give any Proof that they believe his Exiſtence. For this Reaſon I have long wiſhed to ſee this rigorous Act repealed; but on ſecond Thoughts, I conceive there is

no

no abſolute Neceſſity for it, becauſe ſome of our Magiſtrates, charitably conſidering the ſaid Hardſhip, take eſpecial Care not to be too rigid in its Execution.

OUR Corporation has, for ſome Years paſt, labour'd under a firſt-rate Grievance, by the audacious Attempt of ſome evil diſpoſed Perſons, to introduce into the Common Council, Men of Senſe and Diſtinction. Several Gentlemen of this Character, have actually been choſen, but ſtill their Worſhips endured the Evil with a Chriſtian Patience. The factious Spirits, however, not content with having a few Perſons of Fortune and Capacity in that Office, ſeem, of late, reſolved to uſe their Intereſt, to have the whole Corporation compoſed of Gentlemen; than which, I conceive, there cannot be a more violent Invaſion of their ancient and undoubted Privileges.

THE next I ſhall take Notice of is a Grievance, beneath which our Batchelors have long groaned, without any Proſpect of Relief. It is well known, that by our Laws no Perſon is obliged to marry; and it is equally true, that whenever a Man ſuffers an Inconvenience, for not doing what by Law he is not obliged to do, ſuch Inconvenience muſt be a Species of Perſecution, and a more artful Method of diſguiſing his Slavery under the Cloak of Liberty. Now this I take to be the very Caſe of the Batchelors. The Law doth not compel them to contract Matrimony, and yet denies their Iſſue the Privileges of Children born in lawful Wedlock; which is, in Reality, only a more ſly and indirect Method of forcing them to marry: For while they remain ſingle, they are ſtill puniſhed in the Scandal and Diſadvantages of their Offspring. This muſt neceſſarily be a great Impediment to the Propagation of Baſtards, and conſequently, extremely injurious to a new ſettled Country, in want of People for the Cultivation of its Lands. To remedy this Inconvenience, and encourage the Multiplication of the Species, I would propoſe, that Baſtardy for the future, be eſteemed honourable; and natural born Children, equally capable of inheriting the Eſtates of their putative Anceſtors, with a legitimate Iſſue. The moſt plauſible Objection againſt this Propoſal is, that it will diminiſh the Revenue of the Clergy in the Article of Marriage: But this would be abundantly compenſated, by the greater Generation of Children, and conſequently the greater Number of Chriſtenings, as well as of Deaths; the latter of which muſt proportionably augment the Fees ariſing from Burials. Should I, notwithſtanding, be over-ruled, I ſtill hope, that in Compaſſion to the unhappy Sufferers themſelves, ſome public Officer may be appointed to prevent all Poſſibility of encreaſing their Calamity, by qualifying them (ſweet Ladies with your Favour) to divert you with more melodious Voices.

ANOTHER Grievance is, the Clergy's being moſt unreaſonably abridged in their Power and Authority. For tho' they are beyond Controverſy the Ambaſſadors of Heaven, they are often treated with leſs Ceremony than the Plenipotentiaries of earthly Sovereigns. Some People even carry their Diſreſpect, to the Length of preferring their own Judgment to that of their ſpiritual Overſeers, and inſiſt on a Liberty of thinking for themſeves, in Matters ſo momentous as Religion and Government. To what an Inundation of Irreligion and Profaneſs this muſt neceſſarily expoſe us, is a Topic, too Melancholly to dwell on. But to the Redreſs of this Calamity, I hope I ſhall myſelf not a little contribute, by repreſenting their indubitable Claims, in ſome of my future Speculations, in a true Light, and illuſtrating the temporal Grandeur of their Function, to the utter Confuſion of Deiſts and Libertines.

THE laſt Miſchief I ſhall mention is, the *Independent Reflector* himſelf. This preſumptuous Writer has exerted his utmoſt to introduce univerſal Confuſion and Diſorder. A Man in a public Station cannot act awry, but he has the Aſſurance to pry into his Conduct, and without Favour or Compaſſion, expoſe him to open View. He regards neither Rank nor Quality, but impudently animadverts on the Actions of his Superiors without Timidity or Reſerve. He has already diſconcerted ſeveral Projects of the moſt eminent Perſonages amongſt us; and audaciouſly attempts to diſappoint thoſe to whom Men much better than himſelf, ſubmit with implicit Obedience. The Eſtabliſhment of our College he has hitherto retarded by diabolical Inſtigation and Malice prepenſe. His abominable Opinions concerning Election-Jobbers, and the

Heads

Heads of Parties, are enough to ruin half the Politicians in the Province. With reſpect to Religion he is truly deteſtable: For he examines with boundleſs Freedom into the Truth of Opinions, which the Generality of his Countrymen take for granted, and feels his Boſom againſt the Sanction of Authority. The very Tenets which his Grand Mother taught him in his Infancy, he has now the Confidence to unravel and ſcrutipize, according to the carnal Reaſonings of his own Mind. It would be endleſs to enumerate the Grievances of which he is the Author; but as they are all in my own Power to remove, I promiſe the Public they ſhall not remain Matter of Complaint, after thoſe above-mentioned have been fully redreſſed. Z.

To the INDEPENDENT REFLECTOR.

SIR,

YOU have in your N° XXVII. clearly ſhewn the pernicious Conſequence of our continuing to receive Copper Pence, for more than their real Value. The Force of your Reaſoning upon that Subject, I was in Hopes, would long e'er now have open'd the Eyes of our Countrymen, and made them unite their Endeavours, to put a Period to ſo growing a Miſchief, by executing the Plan you propoſed for that Purpoſe. But in many Things Mr. REFLECTOR, you have the ill Fortune of CASSANDRA, whoſe Predictions were never regarded 'till their Accompliſhment rendered all remedy fruitleſs.

I NOW beg Leave to inform you, that another Evil of a more deſtructive Nature relating to Copper Pence, is increaſing upon us, and which, unleſs ſeaſonably prevented, muſt in a ſhort Time ſink many Thouſand to the Community. You have undoubtedly heard, that upwards of £. 40,000 Sterling, in counterfeit Pence, has lately been made in *Europe*, in Imitation of good Copper Half-Pence; vaſt Quantities of which have been purchaſed at 7*d* per Weight, and ſent to *America*. Of theſe we have already a very conſiderable Number paſſing amongſt us. It is not long ſince we had an Inſtance in this City, of a Bag of *Ten Pounds* being paſſed in Payment, which upon Complaint ſeized by a Magiſtrate, and another of *Forty Shillings*, all of the counterfeit Sort.

How great muſt be the Profit to the Villains who import them, is eaſily calculated, when they can purchaſe for *Two Shillings and Eleven Pence* Sterling, as many as paſs here for *Twenty Shillings* Currency. Nor is it to be forgot, that the Compoſition of which they are made is ſuch a Mixture, that their real Value is inferior to that of Iron, if they be of any Value at all. Yet I am perſuaded, from my own Obſervation, that thoſe Counterfeits already make Two *per Cent* of all the Pence paſſing in this Province.

IN order to prevent this ruinous Evil, I would earneſtly recommend it to my Countrymen, and particularly to the Merchants of this City, to count and examine all they receive, and return every one that is not genuine. It is eaſy to diſtinguiſh the falſe from the true, the former being caſt and rough, and the latter milled and ſmooth. Nor would it perhaps be improper for Magiſtrates and Grand Juries, from time to time, to make diligent Enquiries for the Detection of the Delinquents who imports them, that they being ſpeedily brought to condign Puniſhment, may prevent their future Offence, as well as deter others from amaſſing Fortunes by ruinning their Country.

IF the Public will, after this Notification, remain inſenſible of the Miſchief, I have for my Part, diſcharged my Duty, by imparting to them this Intelligence, as you will do in publiſhing theſe well-meant Hints of

Your real Friend,

SHADRECH PLEBIANUS.

ADVERTISEMENT from the Printer.

THE laſt Paper was ſtruck off accidentally uncorrected, and therefore contains the following Errata, which the Reader is deſired to amend; dele the Comma *between* Colony *and* Reſolution, p. 176. l. 21. *for* Eſtabliſhments, *r.* Eſtabliſhment, p. 176. l. 32. *for* Eſtabliſh, p. 177. l. 5. *r.* eſtabliſhed. *dele the Words* to time, p. ib. l. 15. *for* Words, p. 178. l. 41. *r.* Word.

NEW-YORK: *Printed by* J. Parker, *at the New Printing-Office in* Beaver-Street,